

POLS 5399—Independent Study: Colonized Narratives

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Fall 2025

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Office Hours: TBA

THE COURSE: A semester-long inquiry into how voices from one group of colonized people understand and articulate their own experiences as subjects of a pre-existing political discourse and environment. By engaging these voices and their modes of resisting their political “reality,” we will examine the mechanisms and implications of being so defined and their impact on the avenues of agency for those subject.

The format of the class will be reading then discussion. Students will summarize their readings weekly and develop a thesis based on our readings and discussions. The course will culminate in each student pulling together analytical essays based upon the readings, our discussions, and their reflections on the work in the course.

CANVAS: All written and graded assignments will appear on Canvas. Assignments can be found under the “Syllabus,” “Assignments,” and “Modules” tabs on the Course page. All written and graded work will be submitted via Canvas. Students will also find supplementary handouts and readings on Canvas. All modules, essays, and attendance/participation grades are weighted as part of your final grade.

THIS IS NOT AN ONLINE COURSE. WORK SUBMITTED BY STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING AND WHO HAVE NOT GONE THROUGH THE STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY (SAR) OFFICE TO GET APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION(S) WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED.

TEXTS (students are expected to acquire these before the start of the semester):

Prerequisite: Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine* (ISBN 978-1-250-78765-1)

Edward Said, “Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Victims” (Canvas)

Raja Shehadeh, *What Does Israel Want from Palestine?* (ISBN 978-163542-535-2)

Zahi Zalloua, *Solidarity and the Palestinian Cause* (ISBN 978-1-3502-9023-5)

Mohammed El-Kurd, *Perfect Victims* (ISBN 979-8-888-90315-5)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Grading is done on a 10-point scale: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79, etc. The formal requirements of the course and their relative impact on your final grade are as follows:

1) Class Attendance/Participation

25%

Political theory necessarily involves discussion, and, in that vein, discussion involves taking cues from gestures, tone of voice, etc. To serve this end, you are expected to attend our class meetings regularly and to participate in our class discussions. Bring your understanding of the readings, your questions, your answers, and your insights to class meetings and be ready to articulate and discuss them. * Graduate students will be expected to read and discuss (i.e., “teach”) one of the “further reading” texts in the list below at a date agreed upon with the instructor.

(2) Modules: Readings and Assignment Worksheets (1 x 10%, 2 x 20% each) 50%

The course is divided into 3 units or modules. You can find the modules under the “Modules” tab on the course’s Canvas page. Each module consists of several reading assignments (listed below in the syllabus). Each module is also divided into worksheet assignments. Each worksheet assignment refers to specific readings and includes an *Assignment Worksheet* that must be completed in the week that it is assigned. The worksheet will consist of 100-word summaries of the week’s reading assignment and, occasionally, a reflection question on the course material. *These assignments cannot be made up.*

(3) Final Essay (25%) 25%

Students will be asked to write an analytical essay on some aspect of the class material using specific works we have read. These WILL NOT be research papers. Students are expected to limit themselves to the material we have read and discussed and to demonstrate their own substantial analytical abilities. The final essay will be comprehensive and 6-7 pages in length (Word doc, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman) uploaded to Canvas. See the assignments for further instructions. *Late papers WILL NOT be accepted and cannot be made up.*

Required Statement on Artificial Intelligence and this Course

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools’ ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler’s Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler’s Academic Integrity Policy.

The use of AI is NOT PERMITTED in this course. I expect all the work students submit for this course to be their own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. **Any instance of the following constitutes a violation of UT Tyler’s Honor Code and academic honesty values:** a student has another person/entity do any portion of a graded assignment, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, using a previously submitted assignment and/or using AI tools (such as ChatGPT).

SYLLABUS

MODULE 1—Contexts: Said and Shehadeh

Week of 8/27 Organization and Introduction

Read: Said, “Zionism from the Standpoint of its Victims” (Canvas)

Week of 9/3

Read: Shehadeh, *What Does...*, Part One (pp. 1-75)

Week of 9/10

Read: Shehadeh, *What Does...*, Part Two (pp. 76-108)

MODULE 2—Zalloua: Solidarities

Week of 9/17

Read: Zalloua, *Solidarity*, Introduction (pp. 1-37)

Week of 9/24

Read: Zalloua, *Solidarity*, Chapter 1 (pp. 38-66)

Week of 10/1

Read: Zalloua, *Solidarity*, Chapter 2 (pp. 67-94)

Week of 10/8

Read: Zalloua, *Solidarity*, Chapter 3 (pp. 95-124)

Week of 10/15

Read: Zalloua, *Solidarity*, Chapter 4 and Conclusion (pp. 125-168)

MODULE 3—El-Kurd: The Failed Politics of Appeal

Week of 10/22

Read: El-Kurd, *Perfect Victims*, Author’s Notes and Chapter One (pp. 1-32)

Week of 10/29

Read: El-Kurd, *Perfect Victims*, Chapters Two and Three (pp. 33-76)

Week of 11/5

Read: El-Kurd, *Perfect Victims*, Chapters Four and Five (pp. 77-110)

Week of 11/12

Read: El-Kurd, *Perfect Victims*, Chapters Six and Seven (pp. 111-170)

Week of 11/19

Read: El-Kurd, *Perfect Victims*, Chapters Eight and Nine (pp. 171-214)

FINAL ESSAY DUE Tuesday, December 2 @ 11:59pm on CANVAS**SELECTED FURTHER READING (not required):**

Tareq Barconi, *Hamas Contained: The Rise and Pacification of Palestinian Resistance* ISBN 978-1-5036-3262-2

Norman Finkelstein, *Gaza: An Inquest Into Its Martyrdom* ISBN 978-0-520-31833-5

Ilan Pappé, *A Very Short History of the Israel-Palestine Conflict* ISBN 978-0-86154-971-9

Zahi Zalloua, *Continental Philosophy and the Palestinian Question* ISBN 978-1-350-08456-8

Saree Makdisi, *Tolerance is a Wasteland: Palestine and the Culture of Denial* ISBN 978-0-520-34625-3

Didier Fassin, *Moral Abdication: How the World Failed to Stop the Destruction of Gaza* ISBN 978-1-80429-967-8

Pankaj Mishra, *The World After Gaza: A History* ISBN 979-8-217-05889-1

Omar El Akkad, *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* ISBN 978-0-593-80414-8

Deluge: Gaza and Israel from Crisis to Cataclysm, edited by Jamie Stern-Weiner ISBN 9781682196199